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## Evaluation Report of

School Security Officer Program, Pilot Security Upgrade, and  
Emergency Preparedness efforts at Enfield Public Schools,  
Connecticut

**Prepared and signed by**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Dorn".

Date: November 12, 2014

Michael Dorn

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## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Methodology and Limitations.....	4
3.1.	Off-Site Assessments .....	4
3.2.	On-Site Assessments .....	4
3.3.	Limitations .....	4
4.	Key Achievements .....	6
5.	Key Opportunities for Improvement.....	14
6.	Conclusion.....	23
	Appendix I: Helpful Sources of School Safety Resources and Information .....	24
	Appendix II: Biographies of Analysts who Conducted the Assessments and Analysis for this Report .....	27

# 1. Introduction

The Town of Enfield (the Town) requested that Safe Havens International (SHI) conduct an evaluation of emergency preparedness efforts, pilot security upgrade, and the current School Security Officer (SSO) program implemented by Enfield Police Department (EPD) at Enfield Public Schools (EPS/the District) during the 2013-2014 school year. SHI had reviewed the SSO program prior its implementation in 2013, and the Town's elected leaders wanted SHI to evaluate the effectiveness of the program before making the decision on whether the program should be continued. The scope of work in this project also includes a general evaluation of EPS emergency preparedness efforts and the effectiveness and opportunities for improvement, if any, of the pilot security upgrade at John F. Kennedy Middle School (JFKMS) before expanding these types of upgrades to other EPS schools.

The evaluation process included a combination of an off-site review of the District's draft emergency management plans as well as documents related to the SSO program, an online survey of EPS building administrators on the SSO program, an on-site visit to MLKMS where the pilot security upgrade has been implemented, as well as meetings and interviews with approximately 120 individuals, including EPS students, parents, community members, school employees, school administrators, school security officers, school board members, town council members, public safety officials, and mental health officials. Findings from the off-site and on-site evaluation and feedback collected from the site visit are incorporated into this report. The project also included a training session for school administrators and front office personnel, a training and work session with the SSOs, and a presentation on evidence based life-saving concepts for the general public conducted by SHI Executive Director Michael Dorn. We also included in this report a variety of potential resources to assist the EPS in its continual efforts to improve the level of safety for staff, students, and visitors at its schools. Please see Appendix I for sources of available school safety resources.

We were impressed that the Town, the District, and the EPD were open to an external audit and ready to receive critical feedback because by nature, audits are often viewed as focused on finding negative findings (or "problems"). We were also impressed that the Town, the District, and the EPD did not make arbitrary decisions on an important program such as the SSO program at EPS but seeks to make adjustments based on feedback from a wide array of stakeholders (e.g., EPS students, staff, and parents) as well as outsiders (e.g., the community). This will not only help the Town, the District, and the EPD to identify areas for improvement but also generate sustainable growth of community support for EPS (and its individual schools). Building upon existing community support to foster a strong partnership provides added benefits that increase over time.

## 2. Methodology and Limitations

The evaluation included a combination of off- and on-site evaluation in a manner designed to leverage our extensive experience in this type of work.

### 2.1. Off-Site Assessments

- SHI Executive Director Michael Dorn conducted a review of the following documents:
  - Lockdown procedures
  - Town of Enfield – Student/Parent Reunification Guidelines
  - EPD Operation Plan – Tactical School Operations
  - Town of Enfield – Job Description for Armed School Security Officer
  - Memorandum of Understanding regarding School Safety and Security Initiatives Jointly Enacted by the Board of Education and the Town of Enfield
  - Enfield Police Service Reports during February – May, 2014
- Prior to the on-site visit, SHI also designed an online survey for EPS building administrators to take. The survey included a total of 15 questions regarding the current SSO program. The survey was distributed by EPS.

### 2.2. On-Site Assessments

The client contacted SHI in the spring of 2014 to request the audit, but due to SHI Executive Director Michael Dorn's schedule, he and SHI Analyst Phuong Nguyen could not visit the District until late September, 2014. The visit included:

- A tour of JFKMS to observe the pilot security upgrade at this school
- A visit to JFKMS and Enfield High School (EHS) to observe how the SSO program runs.
- A series of meetings and interviews with approximately 120 total individuals, including EPS students, parents, community members, school employees, school administrators, school security officers, school board members, town council members, public safety officials, and mental health officials. The purposes of these meetings and interviews are for SHI analysts to collect feedback, comments, and concerns from these stake holders on the current SSO program.
- Delivery of a training session for school administrators and front office personnel, a training and work session with the SSOs, and a presentation on evidence based life-saving concepts for the general public.

### 2.3. Limitations

This project was limited in scope to evaluation of the SSO program, pilot security upgrade, and emergency management plans at EPS. The assessments did not include:

- School safety, security, climate, culture, and emergency preparedness at all EPS schools

- Fire code inspections
- Building code compliance inspections
- Inspections of hazardous materials storage or chemistry lab compliance
- Formal playground inspections
- Environmental health and OSHA compliance inspections
- Environmental safety evaluations
- Structural facility integrity or engineering inspections
- Information technology security assessments (such as firewall protection)
- Nighttime security lighting studies
- Safety inspections of specific types of systems or equipment (such as boilers and electrical systems)
- Other specialized types of inspections

Though we may occasionally note obvious gaps in some of these areas, this should not be seen as the result of SHI having formally evaluated those areas.

### 3. Key Achievements

The following are some of the prevalent positive findings SHI found during the evaluation:

#### 3.1. Our analysts were impressed with the caliber, philosophies, professionalism, and obvious efforts of SSOs at EPS.

During the assessment, we had opportunities to observe the work of SSOs at JFKMS and EHS and to have a private interview with the officers. We found that the SSOs at these two schools were very polite, professional, and caring. The interviews with groups of students from JFKMS and ESH revealed that they felt the SSOs were professional, polite, friendly, and respectful to them. None of the student felt uncomfortable or intimidated with the present of an armed officer at their schools. In fact, all students felt safer with the presence of SSOs at their schools. Some students stated that even though they did not feel unsafe before, they felt safer and more protective now with the presence of SSOs.

This observation was also shared with EPS building administrators. Based on the Likert scale scoring, our online survey with EPS principals showed the overwhelmingly positive responses to our questions regarding the SSO program at their schools, as shown below:

*The officer(s) assigned to my campus have generally conducted themselves in a professional manner.*

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Neutral	0.0%	0
Agree	9.1%	1
Strongly Agree	90.9%	10

*The officer(s) assigned to my school have generally interacted in a positive manner with students, staff and parents.*

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Neutral	0.0%	0
Agree	18.2%	2
Strongly Agree	81.8%	9

*The presence of armed officer(s) at my school has created a prison-like atmosphere and/or has made a number of our students, staff and parents feel uncomfortable.*

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	72.7%	8
Disagree	18.2%	2
Neutral	9.1%	1
Agree	0.0%	0
Strongly Agree	0.0%	0

*The officer(s) assigned to my school have worked as an integral part of my campus community and are effectively blended into our school climate and culture.*

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Neutral	9.1%	1
Agree	27.3%	3
Strongly Agree	63.6%	7

### 3.2. EPS schools are appropriately safer in relation to the costs of the SSO Program.

According to EPS staff and students, the presence of SSOs makes EPS schools safer and better school environment. In fact, our interviews with JFKMS and EHS students revealed that students generally felt safer with the presence of SSOs at their schools. Some students said that though they did not feel unsafe before, they felt safer now because of the presence of SSOs. The positive feedback from EPS building administrators regarding the effect of SSOs on school safety at EPS was even more overwhelming in our online survey with the administrators, as shown below:

*The officer(s) assigned to my campus appear to have been properly trained to address the needs of my school.*

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Neutral	0.0%	0
Agree	45.5%	5
Strongly Agree	54.5%	6

*The officer(s) assigned to my school have assisted my staff with a number of duties that help me better protect staff, students, and visitors.*

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Neutral	9.1%	1
Agree	45.5%	5
Strongly Agree	45.5%	5

*Having an armed officer assigned to my campus has made my school safer.*

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Neutral	0.0%	0
Agree	45.5%	5
Strongly Agree	54.5%	6

*I feel that the schools in our district that do not have security officers assigned to them are less safe than they would be with an assigned security officer.*

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Neutral	27.3%	3
Agree	36.4%	4
Strongly Agree	36.4%	4
<i><b>The presence of an armed officer at my school has enhanced our ability to operate the school more effectively.</b></i>		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	9.1%	1
Neutral	18.2%	2
Agree	45.5%	5
Strongly Agree	27.3%	3
<i><b>You are comfortable seeking support and/or guidance from your School Security Officer(s) if you have safety/security concerns or issues.</b></i>		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
Disagree	0.0%	0
Neutral	9.1%	1
Agree	36.4%	4
Strongly Agree	54.5%	6

In addition, at the evening public hearing, several speakers who are EPS staff stated that the SSOs make their schools safer, and a parent said that the presence of an SSO at their child's school gives them "peace of mind." In fact, when reviewing the service reports from the SSOs at EPS during February – May, 2014, we observed a number of activities the SSOs had done helped make the schools safer. For example, the SSOs patrolled around the schools and helped secure exterior doors. The SSOs also test emergency communications equipment and have found instances where equipment was inoperable so it could be rendered operable.

Two incidents where SSOs provided valuable assistance to students that were reported in the media shortly after the program was first implemented also demonstrate the diversity of types of assistance these experienced and professional officers can contribute. In one instance, a child became trapped in a piece of playground equipment, and the school's SSO was able to rescue her. In the second incident, school officials were experiencing significant challenges in their efforts to calm a student who was experiencing significant emotional distress. In this case, the SSO was able to calm the child to the point where school staff were able to provide her much needed assistance.

Other instances where SSOs have proven to be of considerable value have taken place since that time. SSOs have helped to reduce the problem of people walking dogs on campus during school hours and have helped school staff catch special needs students who are "runners" or



who have been physically out of control on multiple occasions. These students often pose a danger to themselves, other children and staff. EPS staff also told us during the interviews that the number of irate visitors to their schools has been reduced significantly since they have SSOs were assigned. It appeared that the presence of an SSO helped visitors act more appropriately when they are at schools. SSOs have also detected a number of suspicious persons, vehicles and situations on and near their campuses. In one instance, an SSO responded to a gunshot in the woods near a campus and had other officers respond to assist them.

Finally, we learned from the interviews with EPS staff and SSOs that the job of SSOs is not limited only to keeping the front doors to the main office secure or patrolling schools to check the security of doors. The SSOs also assist schools in traffic monitoring and performing as on-scene first responders. In fact, we observed SSOs assisting traffic during drop-off at both schools we visited during the on-site assessment. As approximately 500 school-traffic related deaths have taken place in the United States in the past fifteen years,<sup>1</sup> the work of the SSOs to enhance traffic safety is especially important. We also saw from the service reports that the SSOs have been acted as on-scene first responders. For example, a report showing that an SSO, following the request of an Ems, helped keep a thirteen year old student with a dislocated wrist while playing football during recess stabilized until paramedics arrived. Another report showed that an SSO, upon seeing a seven year-old student who fell from playground equipment and complained neck and back pain, notified emergency medical services to treat and transport the victim to a hospital. It is obvious that the SSO program tremendously reduces response time for any type of emergency. As these instances indicate, the SSOs also periodically serve as on-scene first responders while first responders who have to be summoned are respond to a school site.

### **3.3. The current SSO program is a cost-effective security approach for EPS.**

Having assisted hundreds of public and non-public schools in implementing and evaluating school security officer and school resource officer programs, we find that though there are some effective K12 programs utilizing contract security officers, our experience has been that the SSO program developed by the EPD and EPS is more cost effective. By using security services from a vendor, a school district has to rely on the vendor for screening, training, and equipment for the officers. This can expose the school district to liability issues should the vendor not provide adequate training for the officers and perform thorough background check on the officers before assigning them to the school district. In addition, contract security officers only receive a percentage of the fees paid to their employing agency. This results in lower salaries for officers which often correlates into lower caliber officers. Therefore, when totaling the cost for appropriate background check, training, and equipment for an officer, the cost to pay to a contract security vendor is much more than the cost of a comparable officer supported by a local law enforcement agency.

Based on our extensive experience in the field, an unarmed officer with comparable background screening and training does not necessarily cost less than the current SSO program. In fact, when reviewing the job description for officers for the SSO program at EPS, we see that the

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<sup>1</sup> [http://safehavensinternational.org/file/2014/08/Relative\\_Risks\\_of\\_Death\\_in\\_U.S.\\_K-12\\_Schools.pdf](http://safehavensinternational.org/file/2014/08/Relative_Risks_of_Death_in_U.S._K-12_Schools.pdf)

SSOs at EPS have extensive training as well as work experience. In fact, these officers are more experienced, has more training and is better educated than the average sworn law enforcement officer in Connecticut. During the on-site visit, we had opportunities to meet and interview some EPS SSOs, and we were very impressed to see that EPS SSOs are very competent and well-verse on current methodologies in their fields. The screening process, background checks, training, command structure, and manner in which these officers are utilized is far above what we have seen in most other school districts around the nation. In fact, we have only assessed one school security officer program in the United States that has officers that are of such high caliber. This program is operated by one of the ten largest school districts in the nation and was first established more than two decades ago. The Town as well as the District would not have paid less had the District utilized security officers from a vendor with the comparable training, experience, competence, and background checks. Moreover, having unarmed SSOs would seriously degrade the ability of the officers to protect students and staff from the types of school violence most often encountered in K12 schools and would dramatically reduce any benefit of having security officers in schools for active shooter events as well as for the far more common types of weapons related violence on school campuses. In fact, many school attacks of various types have been averted by armed officers.

### **3.4. EPS building administrators overwhelmingly wanted to continue to have SSOs at their schools.**

Our online survey with EPS building administrators showed overwhelmingly support for the continuation of the SSO program. Below are all of the responses from 11 EPS building administrators in respond to the question regarding their feedback if the SSO program was to be eliminated:

- *I would strongly encourage the Town of Enfield to continue with the SSOs. They have provided our schools with security that we never had before and have also added another dimension to the school culture. My SSO is an integral member of the Parkman staff and has immersed herself into our school community in a very positive and unobtrusive manner.*
- *I would advocate for keeping the position for a number of reasons. Not only does the officer provide an added level of security but he/she also connects with the students on a daily basis. This allows for our students to see the officer, and thus all officers, as people and helpful/trusted members of the community.*
- *I'd be disappointed. I'd ask how, as the building principal, am I to explain to my parents that without the security officers their children are just as safe as when the officers were present, especially since we told the parents that the purpose for hiring the officers was to increase the level of safety and security.*
- *I would hope that the money no longer used for the SSO would be used to directly impact student learning. Ex... technology, books, etc.*
- *I would be concerned about school safety looking at our current society issues. I feel our staff, parents and students will feel let down if the program was eliminated. I feel it is*

*now necessary to have the extra security in our schools and the presence of a School Security Officer.*

- The security officers have made the school safer and given parents and staff peace of mind.*
- My concerns would be about the amount of restraining orders and custody papers we have. Our security officer is great at checking licenses of folks entering the building. He is an integral part of keeping our little ones safe.*
- I would oppose the elimination of this position.*
- We would be very disappointed if the position were cut. The Town went to great lengths to educate us all as to the necessity of these positions. To remove the position now would leave us all feeling very vulnerable.*
- We would adjust just as we did before having a security guard.*
- Thoroughly disappointed. Vulnerable.*

Several administrators also advised us that the SSOs had proven to be extremely helpful in making sure that exterior door locking issues which had plagued the District were corrected. SSOs have been working closely with District maintenance personnel to see that the numerous door locking problems in the District were corrected.

**3.5. The community has developed an excellent approach to suicide prevention using a multi-disciplinary model and a wide array of stakeholder organizations and personnel.**

During our site visit, we were able to attend a meeting of a suicide prevention task force consisting of a wide array of agencies and organizations. We were deeply impressed with the approach being implemented in the District and in the broader community. This approach is being driven by superb collaboration and an intensive focus on evidence-based approaches. We find suicide prevention to be an extremely important school safety topical area. Over the past fifteen years, schools have been eight times more likely to experience an on campus suicide than an active shooter incident and twice as many deaths result from on campus suicide than from active shooter events. SHI is currently assessing two different school districts that have experienced two suicides on school property each. Many school safety experts believe that reducing the risk of student suicide also reduces the risk that a mass casualty weapons assault will occur on campus. This is because a number of mass casualty school attacks involve preplanned suicides by perpetrators. The recent school shooting and suicide in Washington State that left five students dead is but one example of this.

We applaud the District, the EPD, the community, and state partners for their intensive focus and effective approach to this compelling societal problem.

**3.6. The EPD, local fire, emergency management, and District officials have made significant progress in developing a robust off-site family reunification plan since our last visit.**

During our first visit to the community in 2013, we met with public safety officials to discuss off-site family reunification planning. The District and community partners have worked diligently to develop a far more robust and practical off-site family reunification plan since that visit. Off-site family reunification planning is extremely important for any major crisis event where students are perceived by parents to be in danger. Off-site family reunification is also needed when it is not safe for students and staff to be reunited with loved ones at the school.

**3.7. The EPD and District have collaborated to make a series of upgrades at JFK and other schools since our first visit.**

The EPD and District have implemented dozens of improvements suggested during our first visit. As a few examples:

- Improved signage to make it easier for visitors as well as emergency responders to navigate the campus.
- Installation of protective bollards to prevent a vehicle from intentionally or accidentally being driven into a school.
- Corrective action to make it easier for people to climb onto school roofs. There have been a number of accidental deaths on K12 campuses which were the result of easy rooftop access.
- Two large storage bins that were blocking line of sight at JFK have been removed.

These types of improvements are being implemented not only at JFK but at other public and non-public schools in the community. This indicates that District and public safety personnel were ready to act upon suggestions we made during last year's visit. The types of improvements also indicate that local school and public safety officials are viewing school safety from a wider perspective than school violence alone.

**3.8. EPS students are eager to learn more about safety at their schools.**

During the visits to JFKMS and EHS, we had opportunities to interview with a sample of students regarding their feedback about the SSO program as well as safety and security at their schools. We were very impressed that EPS students, even middle school students, are very eager to know more about the safety and security procedures and measures at their schools and how to be safe. For example, during the interview, JFKMS students asked us about emergency procedures and drills as well as expressed concern about some safety features at their school. Students at EHS expressed a desire to participate in more drills and understood the importance of drills.

**3.9. The visitor management system at JFKMS is comprehensive and should be expanded to other EPS schools.**

This visitor screening systems allows front office staff to check visitors against a list of people who are banned from campus, who have outstanding court orders and barring notices, as well as who are on a sexual predator register database. The system also produces a visitor badge with their photo on it and date and time checking in.

**3.10. The security camera system at JFK is appropriate for the needs of the school.**

The security camera system at JFK is well thought out and is recommended for use in other Enfield schools. We do suggest that a written policy be developed to govern who can capture video images and how distribution of video is restricted. We do suggest that the camera system might be tied to the intrusion alarm system so alarm company personnel and/or law enforcement officers could check the security cameras when an intrusion alarm is activated.

**3.11. The proximity card system that has been implemented at JFK is a good system.**

SSOs are currently issued proximity cards. We suggest that SSOs, Fire Officials and local law enforcement officers be issued proximity cards for emergency use. If possible, card use by public safety officials should trigger an alert to the alarm company to help ensure that 911 is aware of any access by proximity cards issued to public safety officials after hours. All school staff should be required to keep their proximity cards on their person. The proximity card system can help staff and students get back into their school in the event of an emergency that takes place while they are outside. Making it a habit to carry the cards can be critical in an emergency.

**3.12. We found the pilot physical security upgrades at JFKMS to be logical, reasonable for the risk level, and cost-effective.**

We base this in part on the assignment of the SSOs to each school. If any adjustments in staffing are made, the District would need to consider further upgrades to offset the reduction in security that would occur.

## 4. Key Opportunities for Improvement

The following are the key opportunities for improvement for the SSO program, pilot security upgrade, and EPS emergency plans. Please note that the opportunities for improvement are not ranked in the order of importance.

### 4.1. **It appeared there were miscommunication between the Town Council, the District, and the community regarding the programs implemented at EPS.**

During the public hearing, some speakers stated that they wanted the funds for the SSO program to be utilized on other programs, such as educational programs, additional counselors, training, emergency communication equipment (e.g., radios), etc. However, we learned from representatives from the Town that the funding for the SSO program does not affect other school safety programs at EPS. We spoke to a number of individuals who were under the impression that the Town Council had cut EPS budget in other areas to fund the SSOs. Town Council members told us that this is not correct. The Town leaders stated that if funding for SSOs was cut, it would not be applied to any other programs in EPS as this money was allotted for public safety rather than education. We found this misperception to be present with school personnel as well.

In addition, a number of the perceptions expressed as to different approaches are not feasible in our experience. For example, one suggestion that spending a million dollars to provide portable radios for every school employee instead of having armed SSOs on campus is not viable. While portable radios can be a valuable asset for school safety, they do not in any way replace an armed officer on site for many situations. The seven minute average response time for the local police department indicates that this step would not afford anything close to the level of protection that the SSO program provides. Only one school district we have assessed has issued portable radios to all school employees, and this district has done this in addition to armed officers at its schools.

### **Options for Consideration: The Town Council and District should improve their communications with school employees, parents, and the community.**

We find that the District is extremely fortunate to have the Town Council provide the funding for the SSO program. The Town Council and the District may wish to consider a variety techniques to better communicate school safety information. The use of letters to parents as well as social media (such as newsletters, press releases, etc.) to communicate with the parents and local community regarding its efforts in school safety (and education). Helping parents, students, and the community understand the District's efforts in education and safety does not only help avoid issues arise from miscommunications but also generate support for those efforts.

### 4.2. **The scope of work for the SSOs could be increased to provide even greater value.**

Based on the feedback we received from EPS students, staff, and parents as well as our observation during the on-site visit, we noted the scope of work of the SSOs could be expanded beyond basic physical security now that significant improvement in access control at EPS have been achieved. We see that the SSOs can assist EPS with more than just physical security. Increased traffic monitoring, participating in drills and exercise programs, and providing training



for EPS staff and students are among the duties that could be added to the current job for the SSOs. We should note that some movement in this direction has already been taking place at the initiative of various building administrators who have noted and capitalized on these opportunities.

**Options for Consideration: The SSOs should officially be tasked with more duties beyond basic physical security.**

As mentioned in the Key Achievements section above, the SSOs have already been assisting EPS schools with other tasks beyond basic physical security, such as monitoring traffic and other emergency situations. The following are the primary areas the scope of work for the SSOs at EPS should be expanded to:

- Work with each school's principal to evaluate traffic safety in each school's parking lot and to develop approaches to reduce the risk of school-traffic related incidents. School traffic fatalities are a leading cause of school related fatalities in the United States. These officers are uniquely qualified to provide this potentially life-saving types of assistance. A typical example of the types of tragic incidents this effort would help to prevent took place in Detroit. In this instance, a second grader was struck and killed by her own mother's automobile in a school parking lot.<sup>2</sup>
- Deliver short duration but more frequent staff development sessions relating to school security and emergency preparedness for school employees of all job categories.
- Assist building administrators with conducting a wider array of school crisis drills which are conducted in a manner consistent with research. Like many school systems, the District currently only conducts lockdown and fire drills. We suggest that an approach to drills that is more consistent with the all-hazards approach to emergency preparedness be used to not only enhance the safety of students while at school but to help them improve their ability to survive crisis situations they may experience during their lifetime. Both student groups we interviewed expressed significant interest in learning more about how they should handle emergency situations at and away from school. The SSOs are highly experienced in crisis decision-making and emergency communications.
- Assist the EPS in significantly revising emergency preparedness plans as described later in this report.
- Assist EPS middle and high schools in monitoring social media communications for suspended and expelled students as well as adults who might pose a risk to the school community. This approach has helped to prevent some planned school attacks around the nation, but most school districts do not currently have adequate staffing to monitor social media activity adequately. Having a group of thoughtfully selected SSOs who are based at elementary schools who can assist the middle and high school officers and administrators in this manner on a periodic basis would be a valuable asset to the District.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.myfoxdetroit.com/story/25246645/girl-9-dies-after-getting-hit-by-car-at-elementary-school>.

- Participate in the recommended multi-disciplinary student threat assessment team.
- Develop an emergency photo-tour for each school and update the photo-tours annually.
- Participate in the District's team to conduct annual school safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness at each school annually.

**4.3. The SSO program could be operated with fewer offices to save money, but the level of security and safety would be degraded with the loss of each officer position cut.**

We were asked if the SSO program could be operated with fewer personnel to reduce costs. While this is an option if the cost of the program cannot be sustained, security would be degraded with each position cut. This approach would create regular gaps in coverage at the elementary schools and periodic gaps in coverage at the middle and high school levels. In addition, there are currently periods of times where the sworn personnel are away from their campuses, resulting in gaps in coverage. For example, there are instances where officers have to appear in court, are out for sick leave, or out for administrative reasons. We note that at least five school shootings have taken place when school resource officers were off campus. One of these events was the nation's second most deadly school shooting at Columbine High School, and another was the mass casualty shooting at Heritage High School in Conyers Georgia one month after the Columbine event.

**Options for Consideration: If the Town Council is unable to fully fund the program at any future point in time, reducing number of SSO positions could be an option.**

The number of SSOs could be reduced if the Town Council's budget could not sustain the program as currently funded. If this became necessary, the SSO positions for the high and middle school could be eliminated, and a smaller group of officers would patrol groups of elementary schools. This approach would likely meet a reasonable legal standard of care. At the same time, the reader should be aware that the level of safety, security, climate, culture, and emergency preparedness would be reduced significantly from what is offered at present.

**4.4. We noted that training on subjects related to school safety, security, and emergency preparedness measures and drills for EPS students could be improved.**

As mentioned in the Key Achievement section above, students at JFKMS and EHS were very eager to learn about school safety procedures and measures. The students also asked us some questions about related topics. It appeared that EPS students could benefit from more training about safety, security, and emergency preparedness procedures, measures, and drills.

**Options for Consideration: The District should consider providing its students with more training on school safety and drills.**

The SSOs are highly qualified to provide this type of training to EPS students. We suggest the District and Township consider having the SSOs work with fire and emergency management



officials to develop an all-hazards safety program to teach age appropriate sessions for students.

**4.5. The District currently lacks an effective multi-disciplinary threat assessment process.**

The District does not currently have a structured approach to utilize multi-disciplinary threat assessment. A proven approach that has successfully averted a number of planned school shootings and at least four planned school bombings, multi-disciplinary threat assessment involves having a team consisting of a school administrator, a mental health professional and a law enforcement or security officer evaluate situations where someone has made threatening communications. This approach has not only proven to be more effective in preventing violence, but can reduce the chances that a student will be arrested or expelled inappropriately.

**Options for Consideration: We suggest the District and the EPD work closely with many of the State stakeholder agencies in the suicide prevention task force to develop a multidisciplinary threat assessment team approach.**

There are a variety of models based on research that could be reviewed to help the community develop an approach that would be more reliable than current practice in the community. The suicide prevention task force would serve as a superb platform to accomplish this.

**4.6. The District, EPD, and Town officials are concerned about the lack of any viable weapons screening approach in the District middle and high schools.**

There have been a number of incidents involving weapons in the community recently. The District, EPD, and Town Council officials have become increasingly concerned about the potential for internal threats relating to students who might carry and use weapons on school property.

**Options for Consideration: We suggest the District evaluate data relating to this type of risk and use this evaluation to determine which approaches to weapons screening are appropriate.**

From what we observed during our visit this year and last year, entry point weapons screening as used in airports and many courthouses would not be appropriate for EPS at this time. This approach would be extremely expensive (approximately \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 per school annually to be conducted reliably) in relation to the current risk level.

There are a range of options that can be considered including:

- Plain view checks of student vehicles conducted by SSOs and SROs at the high school. This involves looking for weapons and parts of weapons that can be observed from outside the vehicle on a periodic basis. School officials have often been shocked at how many weapons are initially recovered in this manner. As this approach does not constitute a search, it can be a viable option.
- The use of bomb or gun detection dogs to check student vehicles, lockers, restrooms, and public areas for firearms. This should not be done when students are present in any

of these areas. This approach has a powerful deterrent effect as long as students know that these dogs can indeed reliably detect hidden firearms in these areas. Again, students should never be exposed to the dogs during these types of sweeps. Using bomb dogs affords additional protection against attack by explosives. Though rare, bombings do occur every year in American K12 schools. This approach is effective if properly trained detection canines are available.

- Random locker checks can dramatically reduce the use of lockers to hide weapons. In addition, school districts that implement random locker checks also note a reduction in the presence of alcoholic beverages on campus. We recommend this approach be carefully considered before implementation if deemed appropriate for the threat level.
- Random surprise metal detection can be another option. First implemented in the Bibb County, Georgia Public School System in the early 1990's, this approach helped this school district reduce student weapons violations by more than 90% over a ten year time period. This approach was designed by students with assistance of the school system police department and legal counsel. This approach is much less expensive and less disruptive than entry point metal detection. While entry point metal detection requires students to arrive early each day, random surprise metal detection does not make this necessary. There are a range of specific considerations that must be addressed for this approach to be legal, effective, and supported by students, school officials, and parents. We recommend this approach be carefully evaluated before implementation if deemed appropriate to the threat level.

The report author has extensive experience in each of the areas listed above. While he was serving as the Chief of Police for the Bibb County Public School System, each of these approaches was implemented. The program was so successful that it was featured as a model program by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Association of School Resource Officers, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the United States Department of Education, and the United States Attorney General's Office. The Bibb County Model was the only program determined to be a promising weapons violence program by the Hamilton Fish Institute during a year-long research project funded by the U.S. Department of Justice.

That said, SHI urges the District to carefully select and tailor the approaches to fit local risks, realities, and resources. Any of the options listed above should also be carefully vetted by legal counsel and implemented as appropriate based on local conditions. SHI is available for telephone consultation for any of the above options at no cost to the client. In the meantime, the District should consider provide school staff with training on visual weapons screening and pattern matching and recognition. This approach is non-intrusive and very effective. It has been used to stop a number of imminent planned school shootings.

**4.7. The District currently does not have a proper emergency management plan as recommended by the US Department of Education (the ED) in its *Practical Information on Crisis Planning – A Guide for Schools and Communities*<sup>3</sup> updated in 2007.**

It should be noted that the ED recently released a new five-phase model for schools. At this time, SHI does not recommend schools follow the ED's new planning model as we have significant concern with some critical plan content, particularly as it relates to school weapons incidents. While the 2007 planning model was carefully developed with a one-year research project involving more than 30 of the nation's top subject matter experts, the new model was hastily developed and did not utilize a broad multidisciplinary development team. Due to intensive criticism of this planning approach, the federal government has held meetings to determine if the new planning model should be significantly revised. Among the concerns of many top school safety experts, the current model is focused largely on active shooter events and contains no information for hostage situations, edged weapons assaults, and the most common types of school weapons incidents. SHI continues to advise our clients to follow the 2007 four-phase planning model as spelled out in this section of our report.

In general, EPS does not have a four-phase, all-hazard, role-specific emergency management plan as recommended. The current plan could prove to be unreliable during challenging for lower level crisis situations such as an angry parent threatening staff with a knife, a fire, medical emergency or an intruder. The lack of a proper emergency management plan could lead to serious injury and death should an emergency happen.

**Options for Consideration: The District should consider development of a new plan with elements as recommended by the ED.**

The District should develop a new emergency management plan that should:

- **Include a proper written prevention/mitigation plan component:** As this is a critical plan phase as recommended by the ED, we see this as a significant opportunity for enhancing the District's current efforts while also reducing its exposure to civil liability. This is the first in a four-phase school safety plan and is a requisite to a comprehensive approach to school safety. Every public school system and private institution should develop a formal written prevention/mitigation plan to include strategies to reduce risks to students, school employees, and visitors. This plan section is designed for the prevention of instances where people may be harmed or property damaged through accidents and intentional acts.
- **Be more reflective of the different roles of key staff categories:** An important planning concept to remember is that the first employee to encounter a life or death crisis situation must be prepared to immediately and independently implement appropriate critical action steps. Deaths have occurred at schools around the nation when school staff members did not know how to react to various crisis situations without asking for help from an administrator. Action steps in crisis situations vary for roles performed by different types of employees. A superintendent, a building principal,

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>

custodian, a teacher and a food service employee all have different responsibilities and action steps for the same crisis situation. Each person's actions can be crucial, and their efforts must be integrated while achieving the role specific capacity to act to save human life and restore stability under fast paced conditions. Attempting to guide each of these highly diverse job functions with one document has proven to be highly ineffective in school crisis situations. Therefore, each of the primary categories of staff should be issued an emergency reference guide that is customized to fit with their roles, yet integrated with one another.

- **Include proper functional protocols:** Functional protocols are emergency procedures containing specific action steps to be implemented by staff to perform critical emergency functions. Critical functional protocols such as room clear, reverse evacuation, and two types of lockdowns (i.e., preventive lockdown and emergency lockdown) that are based on the nature of the threat rather than the location of the threat should be included.
- **Fully incorporate the National Incident Management System (NIMS):** Without full incorporation of the NIMS, an emergency plan is inherently inadequate to provide an appropriate structure for critical decision-making and prompt allocation of resources that matches the approach that will be utilized by local, state, and federal emergency responders. We cannot overstate the importance of the incorporation of the NIMS into written plan components for proper school emergency preparedness. In addition, the NIMS charts should be provided to administrators and included in every employee's plan component. All administrators and staff should also complete the online NIMS training offered by FEMA.
- **Have a proper response plan component:** Also referred to as "Event Tracking Program," a proper response plan as recommended by the ED includes event tracking checklists for functional protocol in the emergency preparedness plan with spaces to record what time specific actions are taken and who carries out each action. Therefore, built as a redundancy to an emergency preparedness plan, the response plan is to increase a likelihood that the preparedness plan will be implemented in a crisis situation. The ED recommends this type of plan component to help school crisis team personnel implement the preparedness plans under the stressful, sometimes chaotic and time compressed conditions of a major crisis event. A proper response plan will help bring order, accountability, and reliability to a school's response to major crisis events. It also establishes a system for crisis team members to document their actions during the response phase. This plan component should also fully incorporate NIMS protocols as recommended by the ED.
- **Have a robust mental health recovery plan that also addresses mass casualty events:** A proper mental health recovery plan provides an effective method that can be used by recovery and crisis team members to control all activities associated with the crisis situation in a pro-active manner and to lessen the potential negative impact with the media and the community at large. This type of plan provides appropriate mental health recovery support after a crisis event. This plan component helps students and staff address and recover from the stress and emotional pain experienced after a crisis.

Death in the form of suicide and drug overdose (due to increase substance abuse typically following a crisis event) can result from a failure to properly address mental health recovery issues. Multiple deaths of this type have occurred in the wake of at least one school crisis event.

- **Have a school-specific information template for use by all schools:** A template to help building administrators create specific site plan would create considerable value while also increasing the level of awareness of site administrators and their crisis teams. School crisis team personnel should fill this plan template out each year. This, in turn, will help building administrators become more familiar with their facilities, which can further enhance safety, security, and emergency preparedness.
- **Have a viable special needs emergency preparedness planning template to be customized for each student and staff member who requires special assistance:** All schools, including those that currently do not have currently have special needs populations, should have a formal written site-specific plan for assisting students, staff, and visitors with special needs. There are many different reasons that a person might require special assistance during a crisis. Rather than focusing solely on students, staff members, and visitors should also be considered when developing special needs plans. Reasons for special assistance also go beyond physical or mental disabilities. A person who speaks English as a second language, someone with a broken arm or leg, or a female who is pregnant or nursing are all examples of people that might need special assistance or direction during a crisis.
- **Develop an after-hours emergency plan:** Containing action steps to be conducted for incidents taking place during after-hours events, this plan should include protocols consistent with those found in the other emergency preparedness plan components. Just as with other plan components, this after-hours emergency plan should be updated annually.
- **Develop a biological incident plan:** A proper biological plan includes protocols that cover infectious diseases (such as pandemic influenza), contaminated food outbreaks (such as *E. coli*), and toxic materials as recommended by the ED.<sup>4</sup> This plan should include methods of identifying an area in each building for isolation/quarantine and a listing of areas that have already been identified as such. This measure is necessary should a school's clinic exceed capacity to hold patients with similar symptoms indicating exposure to a biological agent.
- **Have a food defense plan that addresses the issues of outside food being provided to students:** A food defense plan outlines what to do to guard against the intentional harm of food. Even if food nutrition staff scrutinize vendors for food safety, when outside food, such as birthday cakes, classroom snacks and pizza is served to students, a breach in the security of food is possible. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) suggests that food defense plans be developed to help reduce the risk of tampering with food sources or exposing students to dangers like allergic reactions and

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<sup>4</sup> <http://rems.ed.gov/K12ThreatAndHSAnnex.aspx>

food poisoning from food brought into the school by parents and students to be served to the student population.

- **Have a proper business continuity plan:** A proper business continuity plan outlines measures for how a school district will get its school(s) back to operation should an incident happen that causes damage to school property (due to fire, flood or other crisis situation), loss of assets (such as computers due to theft), information (due to catastrophic failure of IT systems), mass unavailability of staff (through a pandemic), etc.

We suggest the Township and District consider testing the new plans and the security upgrades with a progressive exercise program coordinated by local emergency management personnel. This exercise program should include drills, tabletop exercises, functional and full-scale exercises. We feel that it is important for the reader to understand that a proper planning cycle for this type of effort is typically from 12 to 18 months. While school and community officials naturally want to have excellent plans as soon as possible, our experience has been that planning that is rushed results in poor quality plans. While it may be possible to develop all of the suggested new plan components more quickly, it is unusual for this to be accomplished properly without assistance from an outside vendor in a shorter timeline without sacrificing quality.



## 5. Conclusion

Although we have identified a number of opportunities for improvement, our analysts were deeply impressed with the caliber, professionalism, competence, and dedication of the SSOs at EPS. The approach utilized to implement the program is what we consider a leading practice in the field. We have already referred other clients to the EPD for not only the SSO program, but for the community based suicide prevention strategy as well. Based on our review of documents provided to us in this project, our observation during the site visit, and feedback from EPS students, staff, and parents, we think that the SSO program at EPS is an effective approach to school safety for EPS and should be continued.

Though we would not suggest that any school district have armed officers solely for situations like the recent attack at Sandy Hook Elementary School, we do see many situations where properly screened and trained security or law enforcement officers are a logical option. The quality, caliber, and performance of the SSOs at EPS the past school year indicates that this SSO program has been a very successful approach. This is clearly demonstrated by the following comments from EPS building administrators in response to our question regarding their thought on the SSO program:

- *I am new to the district and had mixed feelings about having an armed officer in a primary building. After making a concerted effort to put my personal politics aside and remain open minded through the process of familiarizing myself with the role of the officer and observing their duties/interactions on campus, I am a firm believer that having the officer with us not only improves security but also has a positive, far reaching impact on our students' lives. The officers are seen as positive members of the community in a school with a large number of young students that might otherwise see an officer as an adversary due to personal family issues.*
- *Having our School Security Officer has been a wonderful security addition to our school and I would like to continue to see the program in all of our school systems.*
- *The SSO position is a significant deterrent to threats from the outside. I'm very glad that this position exists.*
- *If there is an officer in any school in Enfield, there should be an officer in all schools in Enfield.*

We at Safe Havens International consider it an honor to work with the District, the EPD and their community partners on this important and worthwhile endeavor, and we applaud the efforts of the Town of Enfield, the Enfield Police Department, the District and their community partner agencies and organizations to seek ways to improve the level of safety for the precious lives that make up the Enfield Public Schools community.

## **Appendix I: Helpful Sources of School Safety Resources and Information**

As a non-profit organization, we encourage schools and school districts to try to use as many quality free school safety resources as they can. Below are the sources that provide a variety of quality free helpful resources and information to help improve school safety, security and emergency preparedness:

### **Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) of the United States Department of Education**

The OSDFS administers, coordinates, and recommends policy for improving quality and excellence of programs and activities that are designed to:

- Provide financial assistance for drug and violence prevention activities and activities that promote the health and well being of students in elementary and secondary schools, and institutions of higher education. Activities may be carried out by State and local educational agencies and by other public and private nonprofit organizations.
- Participate in the formulation and development of ED program policy and legislative proposals and in overall Administration policies related to violence and drug prevention; drafting program regulations.
- Participate in interagency committees, groups, and partnerships related to drug and violence prevention, coordinating with other Federal agencies on issues related to comprehensive school health, and advising the Secretary on the formulation of comprehensive school health education policy.
- Participate with other Federal agencies in the development of a national research agenda for drug and violence prevention.
- Administer the Department's programs relating to character and civics education.

The OSDFS provides a number of high quality free resources to schools that are available on their website at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/index.html>.

### **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

FEMA offers a number of free online and live training programs relevant to school safety. FEMA offers free high quality school safety planning training and training on the National Incident Management System at its training facility at Emmetsburg, Maryland. FEMA also offers good quality, and free online training on the same topics via the agencies website. We highly recommend that school officials avail themselves of this valuable and free training. Visit the training section at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov). We would specifically suggest the web training as well as the live training on all hazards school crisis planning. FEMA will pay airfare, meals and lodging for a multidisciplinary team from the district and area public safety agencies to attend this high quality training.



## **Training from Personnel from Local Public Safety, Emergency Management, Public Health, Mental Health and Community Service Agencies**

We suggest that the District ask area law enforcement, fire service, emergency management, public health, Mental Health and Community Service agencies such as the American Red Cross what no-cost and low-cost training they might be able to provide for district personnel. Typically, these agencies can provide a wide range of helpful and good quality free or low-cost training that will be of benefit to school system employees.

## **Training from Personnel from State Agencies**

Similarly, the District should inquire as to any free training related to school safety and emergency management that may be available from the state departments of education, law enforcement and emergency management.

## **The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Enforcement (BATFE)**

Over the years, we have worked on projects with the BATFE that relate to school safety. The agency has a free school bomb threat management resource disk that we helped them develop in concert with the U.S. Department of Education. BATFE special agents can also often provide free technical assistance to school districts relating to school bomb threat management. In some cases, BATFE special agents can provide free training for school staff on bomb threat management. As our lead federal agency for explosives enforcement, BATFE personnel are typically highly skilled, highly trained and extensively experienced experts on bomb threat management.

## **Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI)**

CPI offers evidence based high quality training using the train the trainer model on relevant topics such as de-escalation techniques and passive restraint techniques for special needs students who are combative. We have had volumes of excellent feedback from many of our clients on their training programs. The de-escalation training is very helpful for staff who periodically must interact with students, parents or visitors who are upset and/or verbally abusive.

## **School Safety Specialist's Academy – Indiana Department of Education**

The Academy is probably the most advanced school safety training program regularly offered by any state agency at this time. SHI analysts have presented more than two dozen times for this academy over the past decade and have consistently found the attendees to be high caliber school and public safety officials who are very dedicated to school safety. Feedback we hear from attendees is that the presenters tend to be very good and the networking opportunities are worth the time and effort to attend the program.

We have recommended to several school safety practitioners that they attend the program as out of state guests and thus far the academy has been able and willing to accommodate those requests. The academy may charge a fee for attendance to this program. David Woodward would be the contact point for this program and he can be reached at (317) 232-6975.

## Stop Bullying Now

This campaign funded by the United States Government has numerous free resources for schools. Though directed more for middle school aged students, many high school administrators have found information from the program to be helpful. Please visit their website at [www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov) for more information.

## Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

This program is evidence-based and has a very well established track record of success. We have had consistently good feedback from our clients on the effectiveness of this program. Though there are many bullying prevention programs available to schools, we feel that this is the most reliable and effective program currently available. Please visit their website at <http://www.olweus.org/public/index.page> for more information.

## Safe Havens International Inc.

Safe Havens International is the world's leading non-profit global school safety center. Our mission is to make children, and those who dedicate their lives to educating them, safer no matter where in the world they happen to be born and live. Our analysts have published more than 25 books on school safety, have filmed, edited and produced more than 100 school safety training videos and have work experience in more than two dozen countries. Our analysts have worked on hundreds of major school safety projects for state and federal agencies and have provided expertise to the United States Departments of Education, Justice and Homeland Security as well as for the FBI, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Enforcement, Israel National Police, Vietnam National University and a host of other organizations concerned with school safety.

As a nonprofit center, we work diligently to provide high quality free school safety resources and to serve as a clearinghouse for free school safety resources. We estimate that we will be adding more than 500 free guides and manuals to our resource section this year. On our website, you can find the following free resources:

- Free school safety e-book
- Topical papers and articles
- School safety training video clips
- Emergency planning tools
- Tactical site survey tools

Please visit our website at [www.safehavensinternational.org](http://www.safehavensinternational.org) for more detailed information.

## Appendix II: Biographies of Analysts who Conducted the Assessments and Analysis for this Report



**Michael Dorn, SHI Executive Director** – Conducts off-site crisis plans evaluation and on-site visit, and prepares the written report.


Our Executive Director, Michael Dorn, co-founder of SHI, is one of the most respected, widely recognized, highly credentialed and trusted school safety experts in the world. During his campus safety career of more than thirty years, Michael's work has taken him to, Central America, Mexico, Canada, Europe, Asia, South Africa and the Middle East.

Mr. Dorn has authored and co-authored 26 books on school safety and has authored hundreds of articles and columns for national publications including *School Planning and Management*, *Campus Safety*, *Today's School*, *School Transportation News* and *College Planning and Management* magazines.

Regularly interviewed as a school safety authority by the media, Mr. Dorn has provided balanced and informed commentary for *Education Week*, *NPR*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Time*, *CNN*, *20/20*, *ABC*, *NBC*, *Fox News*, *The Sean Hannity Show*, *The John Tesh Show*, the *New York Times*, the *BBC*, *London Times*, *Tokyo Broadcasting* and hundreds of other media organizations from around the globe.

During his 25-year public safety career, Mr. Dorn served as:

- Police Officer, Corporal, Sergeant and Lieutenant, Mercer University Police
- Chief of Police for the Bibb County Georgia Public School System
- School Safety Specialist for the Office of the Governor – Georgia Emergency Management Agency (top expert for the nation's largest state government school safety center).
- State Antiterrorism Planner for the Georgia Office of Homeland Security Terrorism Division – Georgia Emergency Management Agency.
- Lead Program Manager for the Georgia Office of Homeland Security Terrorism Division – Georgia Emergency Management Agency.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Senior Analyst for Public Safety and Emergency Management – Jane’s (top expert for the renowned 105-year-old British defense, intelligence and school safety publisher with offices in nine countries).</li></ul> <p>A graduate of the prestigious three-month FBI National Academy and bachelor’s and master’s programs at Mercer University, Mr. Dorn also received 14 days of intensive antiterrorism and counterterrorism training from the Israel Police, Israel Defense Forces and the Mossad through the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange Program at Georgia State University. Mr. Dorn has completed more than 3,000 classroom hours of formal law enforcement, fire service and emergency management training. Mr. Dorn also holds a certificate in Management Development from the American Management Association – Harvard School of Business delivered through Mercer University.</p> <p>Mr. Dorn’s expertise has been routinely used by many organizations including the FBI, U.S. Department of Education, National Emergency Management Association, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Israel Police, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, U.S. Attorney General’s Office, U.S. Department of Homeland Security and dozens of state police, emergency management agencies and departments of education.</p> <p>A leading school safety malpractice expert witness consultant, Mr. Dorn served as an expert witness consultant for superior and federal court trials in Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C. Minnesota, Michigan, Kentucky, Florida, Nevada, and in the school safety malpractice litigation following the Red Lake Reservation School Shooting. Mr. Dorn has taught advanced sessions on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) for architects, building planners, educators and law enforcement officers at the School of Architecture at the University of Wisconsin, for the National Crime Prevention Institute, as well as at dozen security design conferences around the nation and the world.</p>
	<p><b>Phuong Nguyen – Conducts on-site visit and prepares reports.</b></p> <p>Phuong Nguyen serves as the Public Information Officer for Safe Havens International. Mrs. Nguyen tallies and prepares all written reports for Safe Havens International Assessment projects and completed more than 10,000 pages of written reports for school safety assessment projects in the 2009/2010 school year. A trained and skilled researcher, Mrs. Nguyen has completed document</p>

preparation for major school safety assessment projects for the Center for Safe Schools, Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Hawaii Department of Education, the Wisconsin Homeland Security Council, the Indiana Department of Education, and numerous public school systems across the United States. Mrs. Nguyen has provided oversight for all reporting for school safety assessment projects covering more than 2,000 public, private, charter, independent and parochial schools. Prior to her work with Safe Havens, Mrs. Nguyen worked in the following roles:

- 1999 to 2001 - Adjunct faculty member teaching English at Vietnam National University, Hanoi.
- 2002 to 2004 -Administrative Assistant - Office of International Relations at Vietnam National University, Saigon.
- 2004 to 2005 - Research Assistant - Vietnam Center at Texas Tech University.

Mrs. Nguyen completed the following degrees:

- 1999: BA degree in English Linguistics at Quinhon University, Vietnam - Honors Graduate number one student in her department.
- 2002: MA in Applied Linguistics at Vietnam National University in Saigon, Vietnam.
- 2006: MA in Mass Communications at Texas Tech University.
- Present: Enrolled in the MS dual degree program for Cyber Security/MBA at the University of Maryland University College.

Mrs. Nguyen has participated in data collection, analysis, and writing reports for all of Safe Havens assessment projects, including dozen Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools projects funded by the United States Department of Education.